

BEWARE OF DAVID YONGGI CHO AND YOIDO FULL GOSPEL CHURCH

August 8, 2006 (David Cloud, Fundamental Baptist Information Service, P.O. Box 610368, Port Huron, MI 48061, 866-295-4143, fbns@wayoflife.org; for instructions about subscribing and unsubscribing or changing addresses, see the information paragraph at the end of the article) -

David Yonggi Cho of Seoul, Korea is one of the most influential Pentecostal preachers alive today. (His name was Paul Yonggi Cho until 1992, when he claimed that God personally changed his name.) He pastors the 850,000-member Yoido Full Gospel Church, the world's largest church, and because of his "success" he has impressed and misled multitudes of other Pentecostals and even non-Pentecostals in this pragmatism-crazed generation. John Wimber said that Cho's growth through "signs and wonders" was one of the chief things that impressed him to follow that route. Southern Baptist pastor Rick Warren conducted a Purpose Driven conference at Yoido in July 2006 and said that he had learned a lot from this church.

That Cho walks in the mainstream of the Pentecostal movement is evident in that he regularly speaks at large, broadly attended Pentecostal meetings, such as the 15th Pentecostal World Conference in 1989. He also moves fairly freely in evangelical circles and has been promoted by men such as Southern Baptist pastor Rick Warren of "Purpose Driven Church" fame, Peter Wagner of Fuller Theological Seminary, Bill Hybels of the Willowcreek Association, and Elmer Towns, co-founder with Jerry Falwell of Liberty University.

Cho claims that he received the call to preach directly and personally from Jesus Christ, who supposedly appeared to him dressed like a fireman ("Paul Yonggi Cho," *Dictionary of Pentecostal and Charismatic Movements*).

Cho teaches that God promises healing and prosperity for every believer. In fact, he considers this part of the gospel. The church's web site presents a "five fold gospel" -- the gospel of regeneration, the gospel of the fullness of the Holy Spirit, the gospel of divine healing, the gospel of blessing, and the gospel of the advent. By adding "healing, blessing, the fullness of the Holy Spirit, and the advent" to the apostolic gospel of the death, burial, and resurrection of Christ (which Paul, by divine inspiration, carefully delineated as "the gospel" in 1 Cor. 15:1-4), these churches have perverted the gospel and Paul warned that if someone adds to or changes the gospel, they are cursed of God (Galatians 1:6-8).

Cho's book *The Fourth Dimension* sets out his strange doctrine, and in typical Pentecostal fashion he claims that he received it directly from God. According to Cho, the "third dimension" is the material world, while the "fourth dimension" is the spiritual world. Through concentrating the effect of visions and dreams in their imagination,

people can influence the third dimension by the power of the Spirit similar to what happened on the first day of creation when the Holy Spirit set to work on the earth. Cho teaches that effective prayer requires visualizing the thing desired exactly in your mind before God and “incubating” that very image in your heart by faith until you receive it. “Through visualization and dreaming you can incubate your future and hatch the results” (*The Fourth Dimension*, p. 44). He describes how that God allegedly taught him this doctrine through personal revelation when he was a young preacher. He was praying for a desk, a chair, and a bicycle and was discouraged because his prayer was not answered when God allegedly said: “Don’t you know that there are dozens of desks, chairs and bicycles? But you’ve simply asked Me for a desk, chair and bicycle. You never ordered a specific desk, chair and bicycle.” Learning his lesson well, Cho ordered up a certain mahogany desk, a specific chair with rollers on the tips “so he could push himself around like a big shot,” and a “bicycle made in the USA, with gears on the side,” and he has been allegedly operating in fourth dimensional power ever since.

To a woman who was concerned because her prayers for a husband were not answered after ten years Cho replied, “Until you see your husband clearly in your imagination you can’t order, because God will never answer. You must see him clearly before you begin to pray.”

Cho admits that he borrowed some of his teaching from Buddhist sects that allegedly operate in miracles in Korea and Japan.

Ignoring the Bible’s emphasis on faith and the fact that most who witnessed Christ’s mighty miracles did not believe, Cho claims that “without seeing miracles, people cannot be satisfied that God is powerful. It is you [Christians] who are responsible to supply miracles for these people.”

Dr. Peter Masters, senior pastor of the Metropolitan Tabernacle in London, England, has examined Cho’s teaching carefully and warns: “What has built the largest church in the world? The answer is, an idolatrous mixture of biblical teaching and pagan mind-techniques. God is deprived of His sovereignty in the believer’s affairs, and the authority of Scripture is replaced by the authority of supposedly direct messages from God and the produce of the imagination. This is the kind of church which has moved hordes of impressionable Christian teachers the world over to jump on to the healing-propheying bandwagon. We need to take very great care in these days” (Masters, *The Healing Epidemic*, “Occult Healing Builds World’s Largest Church,” 1988).

As of 2005, 279 of the Yoido Full Gospel Church’s 527 pastors were women.

We have only exposed the “tip of the iceberg” in relation to the errors of David Yonggi Cho, but this warning should be more than enough for any Bible-based Christian.

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